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ABSTRACT

Problem areas related to student teaching experiences were identified in this study. Weekly seminars for student teachers were held to collect data on specific problems. Fifty problems were identified and then rated according to severity by over 300 students. A correlation matrix was formed, and a component analysis was performed. As a result, items were combined according to component loadings. The components were grouped to provide a factor base. Five scales were formed: administrative, discipline, student peer, motivation, and school policy. Specific problems were identified within each scale. The results emphasized that student teachers should be provided with relevant information concerning administrative functions, discipline of students, problems of student peer groups, motivation of students, and policies of the school and school system. It was recommended that these five main problem areas be included as guidelines for curriculum development in teacher preparation programs. (A 14-item bibliography and one table of data are included.) (BRB)

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AN INVESTIGATION INTO STUDENT TEACHER PROBLEMS DURING PRACTICE TEACHING

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Background and Objectives

The purpose of this study was to identify problem areas related to student teaching experiences. It has been said that since each student teaching assignment is unique, no two student teachers will have identical problems, nor can the problems be handled by the application of simple solutions. Experience has shown, however, that general problem areas can be analyzed and discussed in the classroom. The identification of specific problem areas have been a concern of all colleges directing student teachers in their student teaching experience.

During the term that student teachers were in the schools, weekly seminars were conducted in order to identify, discuss, and solve problems that had occured. Although a clinical approach was often used to alleviate teaching problems, they still presented themselves.

It was during the period of weekly seminars that problems were identified in student teaching (Table I). Problems that the student teachers were having were collected on a weekly basis. There problems were reviewed as the their relationships to each other. Fifty problems were selected. Each was then rated as to their degree of severity by over three hundred students.

Subjects and Instrument

Initially fifty variables were intercorrelated and the respective

significance levels computed. The correlation matrix was then subjected to a principal component resolution. The numbers of dimension retained corresponded to the eigenvalues of R greater than one. Components were rotated according to the normal varimax criterion. As a result of the component analysis items were combined based on their component loadings. The components were grouped to provide a factor base.

Method

Five scales were formed. The first was an Administrative scale; the items included were those with loadings above .4 on component one. A second scale, called Discipline, was formed with loadings above .4. The third scale was called Student Peer with consisted grouping of interaction of students. The fourth scale was called Motivation with groupings of students' responses to learning tasks. The final Policy scale consisted of items loading high on students breaking policies of the school.

Results

Five main problem areas of concentration were prevalent in the study. The first component was the Administration factor. Items loading on it emphasized the problems that student teachers had with administrative practices in the schools.

40.	Classes without books.	.485
41.	Films arriving at wrong time.	.527
42.	Not enough supplies.	.537
43.	Not being able to use gym or classroom when needed.	.666
44.	Failure of lights.	.627

45.	Photographers taking pictures in gym.	.663
46.	Wrong numbers on classroom doors.	.713
47.	Teacher gives assignment and intern will have to follow up.	.513
48.	Teacher giving a test to student to take home and do when Intern meant for it to be given in class.	.751
49.	Overhearing students talk about stealing.	.588
50.	Teacher says that you are teaching too slow.	.688

Component two was the Discipline factor, with five items concerned with student behavior in the classroom loading positively.

6.	Students not staying in seats.	.737
7.	Students always causing a disturbance.	.601
9.	Students picking on other students verbally.	.437
17.	Students knocking on desk.	.520
19.	Teacher seems to be calling the class down the entire period.	.622

The third component was called Student Peer Group Interaction with items loading high that related to positive relation of student peer group pressures on the student teachers.

3.	Girls not sitting properly.	.667
4.	Girls combing hair and putting make-up on in class.	.735
5.	Students exchanging homework to finish it.	.678

A fourth component factor was Motivation of students in regards to the student teacher and learning in various subject areas.

1.	Students who are so tired they don't seem to be able to keep their eyes open during class.	.760
2.	Students not bringing supplies to class.	.769
28.	Students who are slow learners.	.430

The fifth component that was high in loading of students that broke Policies of the school.

11.	Boys putting hands on girls.	.431
26.	Students smoking on school grounds.	.469
27.	Lack of school spirit.	.677

Conclusions

A study of the collected data revealed that at last five main areas of study should be included as guidelines for curriculum development in an effective student teacher preparation program.

According to the results of this study, student teachers should be provided with relevant information concerning administrative functions, discipline of students, problems of student peer groups, motivation of students and policies of the school and school system.

TABLE I

PROBLEMS IN STUDENT TEACHING

1. Students who are so tired they don't seem to be able to keep their eyes open during class.
2. Students not bringing supplies to class.
3. Girls not sitting properly.
4. Girls combing hair and putting make-up on in class.
5. Students exchanging homework to finish it.
6. Students not staying in seats.
7. Students always causing a disturbance.
8. Students skipping school and class.
9. Students picking on other students verbally.
10. Students not prepared.
11. Boys putting hands on girls.
12. Students lack of attention.
13. Small group of students asking and answering most of teacher's questions.
14. Students refusing directions.
15. Students never finishing homework.
16. Students changing anwers on test when being reviewed.
17. Students knocking on desk.
18. Students talking back.
19. Teacher seems to be calling the class down the entire period.
20. Students cursing.
21. Students refusing to do any work or participate.
22. Students fighting.
23. Student suspended returns to school anyway.

24. Students taking medicine.

25. Students taking equipment (stealing).

26. Students smoking on school grounds.

27. Lack of school spirit.

28. Students who are slow learners.

29. Most students in class failing test.

30. Students not doing assignment work.

31. Gum chewing in class.

32. Students loud in discussions.

33. Students under influence of drugs.

34. Student assistant not helping teacher.

35. Pep rallies called on short notice.

36. Ditto machines in use.

37. Student control at assembly.

38. Restrooms locked (prevent smoking).

39. Classes without books.

40. Classes with an over abundance of one sex.

41. Films arriving at wrong time.

42. Not enough supplies.

43. Not being able to use gym or classroom when needed.

44. Failure of lights.

45. Photographers taking pictures in gym.

46. Wrong numbers on classroom doors.

47. Teacher gives assignment and intern will have to follow up.

48. Teacher giving a test to student to take home and do when intern meant for it to be given in class.

49. Overhearing students talk about stealing.

50. Teacher says that you are teaching too slow.

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